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DEPT FOR AF/SPG, A/S FRAZER, SE WILLIAMSON
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DEPT PLS PASS USAID FOR AFR/SUDAN

SENSITIVE
SIPDIS

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TAGS: [ASEC](#) [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [KPKO](#) [SOCI](#) [AU](#) [UNSC](#) [SU](#)
SUBJECT: SE WILLIAMSON MEETING WITH UNAMID

¶1. (SBU) SUMMARY: On August 12, senior UNAMID officials briefed SE Williamson at UNAMID headquarters in El-Fasher. Officials complained of growing insecurity, significant and ongoing delays in deployment, and an ambitious (and most likely unrealistic) plan to make up for lost time. SE Williamson strongly expressed his continued frustration with UNAMID, and asked that the hybrid operation be more flexible and pro-active in the tough environment of Darfur. He also requested that UNAMID inform the U.S. when encountering difficulties, "as we can't help you if we don't know what you need." SUMMARY

¶2. (SBU) (NOTE: UNAMID officials shared the meeting's PowerPoint slides with the visiting delegation. These slides have been sent to AF/SPG, USUN, and the Office of the Special Envoy. END NOTE.)

¶3. (SBU) Deputy Joint Special Representative Henry Anyidoho opened the meeting highlighting the July 8 attack on UNAMID peacekeepers, and the growing insecurity in Darfur caused by banditry and carjackings. He said that despite delays, "UNAMID is doing the best that we can." He noted that UN Security Phase IV may further impede and slow its operations. UNDSS Head of Security in El-Fasher, Francis Sikaonga, stated that the number of carjackings, deaths (for UNAMID personnel, contractors, and INGO workers) and other security incidents in 2008 (as of July 30) already exceeds the total number in 2007.

¶4. (SBU) Deputy Force Commander Emmanuel Karake Karenzi highlighted attacks by unknown forces on UNAMID forces in Shangil Tobaya and Muhajaria. He stated that JEM has tried to contact Minni Minnawi and other forces, and that it has approximately two to three thousand fighters along the Chad-Sudan border in North Darfur. A similar number of Khartoum-supported Chadian rebels are poised along the Chad-Sudan border in West Darfur. According to Karenzi, the number of UNAMID patrols, convoy escorts, and support to NGOs have all increased in 2008. Like previous speakers, Karenzi also noted that the Phase IV security will affect operations. Karenzi ended his presentation saying that 90% of battalions already deployed do not meet UN standards, and that most battalions promised by troop contributing countries have not yet deployed.

¶5. (SBU) On these points, SE Williamson interjected and stated that Ethiopian officials recently expressed their dissatisfaction with UNAMID's inability to absorb their troops. He noted that before last month, UNAMID had spent only 300 million of a 1.2 billion dollar budget (though adding that in the past month over 900 million dollars had been quickly committed.) "I have never known a bureaucracy that is not able to spend money," stated Williamson. Williamson labeled UNAMID's slow progress as "frustrating and incomprehensible." He noted that in over six months, UNAMID has added only two battalions, a source of deep disappointment for the U.S. Williamson said that UNAMID needs to pass on requests for help to the U.S, as "as we can't help you if we don't know what you need." He noted that in 2008, the U.S. has spent an amount of money training African troops that is greater than that spent building

camps, asking, "How do you justify that?"

¶16. (SBU) DJSR For Operations and Management, Hocine Medili lamely stated that "everyone in the room believes we should be further along than we are." He noted that more troops and camps are "in the pipeline," to which Williamson responded, "How long did it take the US to build camps for AU peacekeepers compared to what you are doing?" As an example, Williamson said that UNAMID should be flexible and accept needed equipment, even if it does not meet exactly the UN's high and rigid standards. Using helicopters as an example, he stated that the Ethiopians would like to bring their attack helicopters without night vision, but that UN standards prevent this. DFC Karenzi readily admitted that some attack helicopters, whatever their limitations, are better than none.

¶17. (SBU) The remainder of the meeting focused on ongoing delays in deployment. Karenzi noted that deployment stands at 42% (8077 of 19,555,) but that 80% might be attained by the end of 2008. SE Williamson stated that this number appears unrealistic and challenged UNAMID officials to bet on this. Logistics Chief Ian Divers jokingly stated that he would not accept Williamson's bet, but that UNAMID officials are doing their best under difficult circumstances. He observed that UN headquarters in NY did not accept his earlier and lower forecasts for deployment by the end of 2008 preferring a higher number to give a more optimistic (but unrealistic) number to fool the unwary. He said UNAMID in El-Fasher then raised the goal to 80%, even though they will have to struggle to achieve this goal. Divers acknowledged that this high goal depends on the completion of a number of "resource requirements" including a new airport in El-Geneina and air lift support directly to Darfur bypassing clogged Port Sudan. (Note: Pushed on the feasibility of 80% deployment, UNAMID noted they came up with a

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realistic assessment of 65% deployment; however Jane Hol Lute stated that was not acceptable and made them revise their assessment. The result was the current optimistic 80% deployment. End note.)

¶18. (SBU) COMMENT: Bureaucratic battles between New York and El-Fasher have resulted in goals that no one in El-Fasher believes are attainable. In the coming months, we can expect that UNAMID officials will focus on Phase IV Security as a likely excuse for slow progress. Although a source of continued frustration, the meeting did provide an opportunity to remind UNAMID of the need to be flexible, accountable, and accepting of outside help. UNAMID officials do feel that they are victims of former officials in DPKO playing a "double game," blaming a nasty regime in Khartoum and TCCs for their own internal shortcomings and reluctance for the mission. END COMMENT.

¶19. (SBU) SE Williamson cleared this cable prior to transmission.

FERNANDEZ